



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

June 22, 2009

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

#11 JUNE 22, 2009

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ITEM 57-B, APRIL 21, 2009 AGENDA, REPORT BACK ON FUNDING OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE HEARING EXAMINER PROGRAM

On April 21, 2009, your Board instructed the Chief Executive Office (CEO) to work with the Acting Director of Regional Planning to determine what other funding options are available for the Hearing Examiner program and to report back to the Board during Budget Deliberations. Currently there are no available funding options to sustain an ongoing program.

The 2009-10 Regional Planning Proposed Budget reflects elimination of the Hearing Examiner Program, totaling \$337,000 and 3.0 budgeted vacant positions. This curtailment was one component of the Department's total curtailment of \$741,000 needed to address the County's projected structural deficit for FY 2009-10 (the remainder of the curtailment consisted of the elimination of 4.0 additional vacant budgeted positions, totaling \$404,000).

The Hearing Examiner Program was added to the Department's 2007-08 Budget to enhance service by conducting community based public hearings on pending cases thereby providing communities with more opportunities to become directly involved in the public hearing process. Subsequently, Regional Planning developed an implementing ordinance that amended the County Code Title 21 to effectuate the Hearing Examiner Program. However, the Department did not implement the Program and the positions remained vacant.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

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There are no viable funding alternatives for the Hearing Examiner Program within the Department. If a decision is reached to restore this program, funding must come from curtailments in other areas of the County's budget. Given the current situation, this would be difficult to achieve. Regional Planning estimated revenues continue to decline in the current fiscal year due to the economic downturn which has adversely affected the building and development segments of the economy. The Department's 9th Month Budgeted Status report reflects a projected \$1.444 million deficit for 2008-09, most of which is the result of a \$2.19 million deficit in Charges for Services revenue. Additional curtailments for the 2009-10 fiscal year are also recommended which would further preclude the Department from absorbing the total cost of the Hearing Examiner Program within the existing budget.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me or your staff may contact George Parker of my staff at 213-974-4363.

WTF:LS
RG:GP:kd

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
 County Counsel
 Acting Director of Regional Planning